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IN THE AMAZON
JUNGLE
ADVENTURES IN REMOTE PARTS OF THE
UPPER AMAZON RIVER, INCLUDING A
SOJOURN AMONG CANNIBAL INDIANS
BY
ALGOT LANGE
EDITED IN PART BY J. ODELL HAUSER
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
FREDERICK S. DELLENBAUGH
WITH 86 ILLUSTRATIONS FROM ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS
BY THE AUTHOR
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
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died from the hemorrhage following the
operation.
Largely through the danger of the attack
from this scourge, though perhaps not entirely,
the natives have adopted the method of
bathing in use. A plunge into the river is
unheard of, and bath-houses are constructed
SO as to make this unnecessary. A hole
about eighteen inches square is cut in the
middle of the floor-built immediately above
the water-through which the bather, provided
with a calabash or gourd of the bread-fruit
tree, dips water up and pours it over himself
after he has first examined it carefully. The
indigenous Indians, living in the remote
parts of the forest, do not use this mode of
protection, but cover the vulnerable portions
of the body carefully with strips of bark, which
render complete immersion less dangerous.
During my walks in the forest I often came
across snakes of considerable length, but never

found any difficulty in killing them, as they were sluggish in their movements and seemed to be inoffensive. The rubber-workers, who had no doubt had many encounters with reptiles, told me about large sucurujus or boa-constrictors, which had their homes in the river not many miles from headquarters.

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They told me that these snakes were in possession of hypnotic powers, but this, like many other assertions, should be taken with a large grain of salt. However, I will relate an incident which occurred while I lived at Floresta, and in which I have absolute faith, as I had the opportunity of talking to the persons involved in the affair.
José Perreira, a rubber-worker, had left headquarters after having delivered his weekly report on the rubber extracted, and was paddling his canoe at a good rate down the stream, expecting to reach his hut before midnight. Arriving at a recess in the banks formed by the confluence of a small creek called Igarapé do Inferno, or the Creek of Hell, he thought that he heard the noise of some game, probably a deer or tapir, drinking, and he silently ran his canoe to the shore, where he fastened it to a branch, at the same time holding his rifle in readiness. Finally, as he saw nothing, he returned to the canoe and continued his way down-stream.
Hardly more than ten yards from the spot, he stopped again and listened. He heard only the distant howling of a monkey. This he was used to on his nightly trips. No! there was something else! He could not say

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it was a sound. It was a strange something that called him back to the bank that he had left but a few minutes before. He fastened his canoe again to the same branch and crept up to the same place, feeling very uneasy and

uncomfortable, but seeing nothing that could alarm him—nothing that he could draw the bead of his rifle on. Yet, something there was! For the second time he left, without being able to account for the mysterious force that lured him to this gloomy, moon-lit place on the dark, treacherous bank. In setting out in the stream again he decided to fight off the uncanny, unexplainable feeling that had called him back, but scarcely a stone's throw from the bank he had the same desire to return, a desire that he had never before experienced. He went again, and looked, and meditated over the thing that he did not understand.

He had not drunk cachassa that day and was consequently quite sober; he had not had fever for two weeks and was in good health physically as well as mentally; he had never so much indulged in the dissipations of civilisation that his nerves had been affected; he had lived all his life in these surroundings and knew no fear of man or beast. And

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now, this splendid type of manhood, free and unbound in his thoughts and unprejudiced by superstition, broke down completely and hid his face in his hands, sobbing like a child in a dark room afraid of ghosts. He had been called to this spot three times without knowing the cause, and now, the mysterious force attracting him, as a magnet does a piece of iron, he was unable to move. Helpless as a child he awaited his fate.

Luckily three workers from headquarters happened to pass on their way to their homes, which lay not far above the "Creek of Hell," and when they heard sobbing from the bank they called out.

The hypnotised seringueiro managed to state that he had three times been forced, by some strange power, to the spot where he now was, unable to get away, and that he was deadly frightened. The rubber-workers, with rifles cocked, approached in their canoe, fully prepared to meet a jaguar, but when only a few yards from their comrade they saw directly under the root where the man was sit-

ting the head of a monstrous boa-constrictor,
its eyes fastened on its prey. Though it
was only a few feet from him, he had been
unable to see it.
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RUBBER-WORKERS' HOME NEAR LAKE INNOCENCE

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Length of Sucuruju
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One of the men took good aim and fired,
crushing the head of the snake, and breaking
the spell, but the intended victim was com-
pletely played out and had to lie down in the
bottom of the canoe, shivering as if with ague.
The others took pains to measure the length
of the snake before leaving. It was 79 palmas
or 52 feet 8 inches. In circumference it meas-
ured II palmas, corresponding to a diameter
of 28 inches. Its mouth, they said, was two
palmas or sixteen inches, but how they mean
this to be understood I do not know.
This event happened while I was living at
headquarters. I had a long talk with
Perreira, but could not shake his statement,
nor that of the three others; nevertheless,
I remained a sceptic as to this alleged charming
or mesmeric power of the snakes, at least so
far as man is concerned.
At that time we were awaiting the arrival
of the monthly launch from the town of
Remate de Males, and had spent a day
weighing rubber at the camp of one of the
employees, half a day's journey from head-
quarters. The rubber-pellets were loaded
into our
large canoe to take up to Floresta.
We spent the evening drinking black coffee
and eating some large, sweet pineapples,

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In the Amazon Jungle
whereafter we all took a nap lasting until
midnight, when we got up to start on our night.
It had been considered best to travel
trip.
at night, when it was nice and cool with none
of the pestering insects to torture us, and we

were soon paddling the heavy canoe at a merry rate, smoking our pipes and singing in the still, dark night. Soon we rounded a point where the mighty trees, covered with orchids and other parasitic plants, sent their branches down to the very water which in its depths was hiding the dreaded water-snakes. The only sound we heard was the weird calling of the night-owl, the "Mother of the Moon" as the Indians call it. Except this and the lapping sound of water, as we sped along, nothing disturbed the tranquillity of the night.
I was in the act of lighting another pipe when one of the men cried out:
"What's this?"
We all stopped paddling and stared ahead at a large dark object, resting on a moon-lit sand-bar not far from us. Then someone said, "Sucuruju." Few people can comprehend the feeling that creeps into one's heart when this word is pronounced, under such circumstances, in the far-off forest, in the middle of the night. The word means
HARPOONING A LARGE STING-RAY
He seized the harpoon, and with a powerful swing sent it into the water

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boa-constrictor, but it meant a lot more at this moment. An indescribable feeling of awe seized me. I knew now that I was to face the awful master of the swamps, the great silent monster of the river, of which so much had been said, and which so few ever meet in its lair.
Running the canoe ashore we advanced in single file. I now had a chance to inspect the object. On a soft, muddy sand-bar, half hidden by dead branches, I beheld a somewhat cone-shaped mass about seven feet in height. From the base of this came the neck and head of the snake, flat on the ground, with beady eyes staring at us as we slowly advanced and stopped. The snake was coiled, forming an enormous pile of round, scaly monstrosity, large enough to crush us all to death at once. We had stopped at a distance of about fifteen feet from him, and looked at each other. I felt as if I were

spellbound, unable to move a step farther
or even to think or act on my own initiative.
The snake still made no move, but in the
clear moonlight I could see its body expand
and contract in breathing; its yellow eyes
seeming to radiate a phosphorescent light.
I felt no fear, nor any inclination to retreat,

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In the Amazon Jungle
yet I was now facing a beast that few men had
ever succeeded in seeing. Thus we stood look-
ing at each other, scarcely moving an eyelid,
while the great silent monster looked at us.
I slid my right hand down to the holster of
my automatic pistol, the 9mm. Luger, and
slowly removed the safety lock, at the same
time staring into the faces of the men.
In
this manner I was less under the spell of the
mesmerism of the snake, and could to some ex-
tent think and act. I wheeled around while I
still held control of my faculties, and, perceiv-
ing a slight movement of the snake's coils,
I fired point-blank at the head, letting go the
entire chamber of soft-nose bullets. Instantly
the other men woke up from their trance and
in their turn fired, emptying their Winchesters
into the huge head, which by this time was
raised to a great height above us, loudly
hissing in agony.
Our wild yelling echoed through the deep
forest. The snake uncoiled itself and writhing
with pain made for the water's edge. By this
time we were relieved of the terrible suspense,
but we took care to keep at a respectful
distance from the struggling reptile and the
powerful lashing of its tail, which would have
killed a man with one blow.
SHOOTING FISH ON LAKE INNOCENCE
Fitting one of his five-foot arrows to the bow-string, he sent it
into the head of the pirarucus
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Skinning the Boa
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After half an hour the struggles grew weaker,
yet we hesitated to approach even when it

seemed quiet and had its head and a portion of its body submerged in the water. We decided to stay through the night and wait here a day, as I was very anxious to skin the snake and take the trophy home to the States as a souvenir of a night's adventure in this far-off jungle of the Amazon. We went up in the bushes and lit a fire, suspended our hammocks to some tree-trunks, and slept soundly not more than ten yards from the dying leviathan.
We all got up before sunrise, had our coffee in haste, and ran down to see the snake. It was dead, its head practically shot to pieces. We set to work, stretching the huge body out on the sand-bar, and by eight o'clock we had the entire snake flat on the ground, ready to measure and skin.
It was a most astonishing sight, that giant snake lying there full length, while around it gathered six Amazon Indians and the one solitary New Yorker, here in the woods about as far from civilisation as it is possible to get.
I proceeded to take measurements and used the span between my thumb and little finger tips as a unit, knowing that this was exactly eight inches.

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Beginning at the mouth of the snake, I continued to the end and found that this unit was contained eighty-four times. Thus 84 times 8 divided by 12 gives exactly 56 feet as the total length. In circumference, the unit, the "palma," was contained 8 times and a fraction, around the thickest part of the body. From this I derived the diameter 2 feet I inch.
These measurements are the result of very careful work. I went from the tail to the nose over again so as to eliminate any error, and then asked the men with me also to take careful measurements in their own manner, which only confirmed the figures given above.
Then we proceeded to skin the snake, which was no easy task under the fierce sun now baking our backs. Great flocks of urubus, or vultures, had smelled the carcass and were circling above our heads waiting

for their share of the spoils. Each man had
his section to work on, using a wooden club
and his machete. The snake had been laid
on its belly and it was split open, following the
spinal column throughout its length, the
ventral part being far too hard and un-
yielding. About two o'clock in the after-
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THE PIRARUCU
They stuck a pole through the great gills of the pirarucu

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Doubted by the Natives
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noon we had the work finished and the
carcass was thrown into the river, where it
was instantly set upon by the vigilant piranhas
and alligators.
Standing in front of this mmense skin I
could not withhold my elation.
"Men," I said, "here am I on this the
29th day of July, 1910, standing before a
snake-skin the size of which is wonderful.
When I return to my people in the United
States of America, and tell them that I
have seen and killed a boa-constrictor nearly
eighteen metres in length, they will laugh and
call me a man with a bad tongue."
Whereupon my friend, the chief, rose to
his full height and exclaimed in a grieved tone:
"Sir, you say that your people in the north
will not believe that we have snakes like
this or even larger. That is an insult to
Brazilians, yet you tell us that in your town
Nova York there are barracãos that have
thirty-five or even forty stories on top of
each other! How do you expect us to believe
such an improbable tale as that?"
I was in a sad plight between two realities
of such mighty proportions that they could
be disbelieved in localities far removed from
each other.

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In the Amazon Jungle.
We brought the skin to headquarters,
where I prepared it with arsenical soap and
boxed it for later shipment to New York.

The skin measured, when dried, 54 feet 8
inches, with a width of 5 feet 1 inch.
I
Kind reader, if you have grown weary
of my accounts of the reptilian life of the
Amazon, forgive me, but such an important
rôle does this life play in the every-day
experience of the brave rubber-workers that
the descriptions could not be omitted.. A
story of life in the Amazon jungle without
them would be a deficient one, indeed..
There is a bird in the forests, before referred
to, called by the Indians "A mae da lua," or
the "Mother of the Moon." It is an owl'
and makes its habitation in the large, dead,
hollow trees in the depths of the jungle, far
away from the river front, and it will fly out
of its nest only on still, moonlit nights, to
pour forth its desolate and melancholy song.
This consists of four notes uttered in a major
key, then a short pause lasting but a few
seconds, followed by another four notes in the
corresponding minor key. After a little while
the last two notes in the minor key will be
heard and then all is still.
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AMAZONIAN GAME-FISHI
These waters contain great quantities of fine game-fish

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